

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 PORT O 02348 141343Z

53

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 H-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 AID-05 /054 W

----- 103390

O 141317Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9695

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NASSAU PRIORITY

UNCLAS PORT OF SPAIN 2348

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, TD

SUBJECT: ERIC WILLIAMS WINS SOLID ELECTORAL MANDATE

REF: (A) PORT OF SPAIN 2305, (B) PORT OF SPAIN 2275

1. RULING PEOPLES NATIONAL MOVEMENT (PNM) UNDER LEADERSHIP OF PRIME MINISTER ERIC WILLIAMS WON A SOLID NEW MANDATE AT THE POLLS SEPTEMBER 13, WINNING 24 OF 36 PARLIAMENTARY SEATS AND REASSERTING ITS STRENGTH IN ALL ITS TRADITIONAL STRONGHOLDS EXCEPT TOBAGO. MULTIPLICITY OF PARTIES COMPETING HAD RELATIVELY LITTLE EFFECT AND PNM RAN STRONGER THAN HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED BEFORE THE ELECTION, ROLLING UP ABSOLUTE MAJORITIES IN MANY OF ITS VICTORIOUS CONSTITUENCIES. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TWO MINISTERS FROM TOBAGO, ALL OF THE PRESENT CABINET MINISTERS RETAINED THEIR SEATS, INCLUDING THE FOUR MINISTERS WHOM THE PRIME MINISTER DID NOT PERSONALLY ENDORSE.

2. SECOND MAJOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE ELECTION WAS THE COMPLETE ELIMINATION OF THE TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION PARTY, THE EAST INDIAN-
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 PORT O 02348 141343Z

BASED DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY (DLP) AND ITS SPLIT-OFF FACTION,

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY (SDLP). NEITHER WON ANY SEATS IN PARLIAMENT, AND PERHAPS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THE TOTAL VOTE FOR THE DLP AND SDLP WAS VIRTUALLY TRIVIAL EVEN IN ITS FORMER STRONGHOLDS OF THE SUGAR BELT AND EVEN WHERE PARTY LEADERS WERE ON THE BALLOT.

3. PICKING UP THE BANNER OF THE OPPOSITION WAS THE LEFTIST UNITED LABOR FRONT (ULF). SPARKED BY THE CHARISMA AND ORATORY OF SUGAR WORKER LEADER BASDEO PANDAY, WHO NOW SHOULD BECOME LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT, THE ULF WON TEN SEATS, ALL IN THE FORMER DLP STRONGHOLDS OF THE PREDOMINATELY EAST INDIAN SUGAR BELT. MOST OF THESE VICTORIES WERE BY WIDE MARGINS, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE A FEW CLOSE ULF/PNM CONTESTS. IN THE NORTHERN TIER OF TRADITIONAL PNM SUPPORT, THE ULF ONLY HAD SCATTERED SHOWINGS OF STRENGTH.

4. THE DEMOCRATIC ACTION CONGRESS (DAC) UNDER FORMER PNM CABINET MINISTER A.N.R. ROBINSON WON BOTH TOBAGO CONSTITUENCIES TO BECOME THE ONLY OTHER PARTY SUCCESSFULLY TO GET A SEAT IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT. THE DAC VICTORIES ON TOBAGO UNSEATED TWO PNM CABINET MEMBERS: ATTORNEY GENERAL BASIL PITT AND MINISTER OF TOBAGO AFFAIRS WILBERT WINCHESTER. ELSEWHERE, THE DAC SHOWING WAS POOR.

5. NEXT TO THE DLP, THE INTELLECTUAL TAPIA MOVEMENT WAS THE CLEAR LOSER IN THE ELECTION. ALTHOUGH RUNNING STRONG IN A FEW CONSTITUENCIES, TAPIA FAILED TO ELECT A SINGLE CANDIDATE AND SHOWED ONLY TRIVIAL STRENGTH IN THE SUGAR BELT. ALTHOUGH TAPIA LEADER LLOYD BEST WAS MANY PEOPLE'S CHOICE FOR LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION HE WILL NOT BE IN THE NEW HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

6. VOTER TURNOUT WAS RELATIVELY LOW, APPARENTLY LESS THAN 60 PER CENT OVERALL. THE CUMULATIVE VOTE OF THE MINOR PARTIES WHICH SPRANG UP LIKE MUSHROOMS THIS PAST YEAR WAS NEGLIGIBLE.

7. THE ELECTION WAS ENTIRELY PEACEFUL AND WITHOUT VIOLENCE OR INCIDENT. WE HAVE HEARD OF NO COMPLAINTS YET BY ANY PARTY OR CANDIDATE, ALTHOUGH INEVITABLY SOME VOTE RECOUNTS MAY BE CALLED FOR IN CLOSE CONSTITUENCIES. THERE WERE VERY FEW CLOSE VOTES, HOWEVER.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 PORT O 02348 141343Z

8. WE WILL PROVIDE A MORE THOROUGH ELECTION ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY AFTER WE SEE FINAL VOTE TALLIES FROM ALL CONSTITUENCIES.
FAY

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PORTO02348
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760346-0736
From: PORT OF SPAIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760962/aaaacbee.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PORT OF SPAIN 2305, 76 PORT OF SPAIN 2275
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vandyklc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 FEB 2004 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by vandyklc>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ERIC WILLIAMS WINS SOLID ELECTORAL MANDATE
TAGS: PINT, TD, DAC-DEMOCRATIC ACTION CONGRESS, PNM-PEOPLES NATIONAL MOVEMENT, (ROBINSON, A N R), (WILLIAMS, ERIC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006